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Asks Carter: Why did you take so long?

By JAMES O. JACKSON and MICHAEL SNEAD

Wiesbaden, West Germany—One of the American hostages freed from Iran stood face to face with Jimmy Carter and suddenly began crying.

Looking the former President in the eye, he asked: "Why did you leave us there so long?" Then he turned and walked away.

The Chicago Tribune learned of the dramatic confrontation between Carter and the unidentified hostage from patients at the U.S. Air Force Hospital here.

The patients quoted a nurse as saying that some hostages, angry over their long captivity and over policies that led to their being taken hostage, had been reluctant to meet with Carter when he visited the hospital Wednesday night.

The Tribune also learned harrowing details of how the hostages were mistreated by their Iranian captors and of how they feared for their lives. Patients who talked with the former hostages at length provided the details.

The patients quoted Clair Barnes, who served in the communications section of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran before his capture, as saying: "I never had any hope from the beginning. Sometimes I thought I'd never see the sun rise again. All I ever did was read, but when I wasn't bored to death, I was scared stiff."

PHILLIP R. WARD, another communications specialist, was quoted as saying: "I never gave up hope." But on a couple of occasions, he added, "We thought we were dead."

Staff Sgt. Joseph Subic, a member of the defense attache's staff at the embassy, was quoted as saying that the hostages were moved several times to different prisons.

"We were always in small groups, from three to five people in a group," he said. "I didn't see sunlight for eight months. Our captors would take blankets and cover the few windows around us."

He said the experience was "frightful at times."

Barnes was quoted as saying that some hostages had tried to escape by sawing through prison bars.

"They'd go out the windows, then they'd get caught and get beaten with rubber hoses," he said. Among them, he said, was Malcolm Kalp, a diplomat

in the economic and commercial section of the embassy.

"Some others were beaten for different reasons," he said.

Barnes said he routinely went to bed at 4 a.m. and slept until 2 p.m., filling the intervening hours by reading.

He said he was kept for a time in Mashhad, a city in northwestern Iran. The hostages at Mashhad were kept in groups of three, he said. He guessed that there might have been 20 hostages altogether in Mashhad, but said the different groups never met.

"I saw one-half day of sunlight in eight months," he said.

Barnes said hostages were handcuffed while they slept in the early stages of their confinement, but later this practice was dropped.

"It got worse toward the end before we were released," he said. "We ate food out of the (embassy) commissary, but the people didn't know how to cook it."

Barnes said the hostages received newspapers from their captors irregularly. They only found out about the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan two months after it happened, he recalled.

A patient asked when the hostages had learned of the disastrous American attempt to rescue them last April 25. "We knew something was going on 24 hours after the attempt," Barnes replied, but he did not elaborate.

BARNES SAID the Iranians kept television monitors trained on the hostages everywhere, "even in the bathroom."

One hostage told hospital patients he had been lucky because he and some of the other men were held along with Kathryn Koob and Elizabeth Ann Swift, the two women hostages. The women cooked for them, he said, "and it was great."

At one point, Subic mentioned that his fiancée in England had become a celebrity in her hometown, and people in England planned to finance a trip for her to the United States to see him.

He said the U.S. government was going to pay the hostages about \$100 a day for the 444 days they spent in captivity.

Another hostage chimed in: "A thousand dollars a day would be more like it, for what we went through."

Subic replied: "Even that wouldn't be enough."